

From the Editors

With this issue we present to our readers some of the papers that over the past five years have received the Richard M. Dorson Student Paper Prize. Each year the Folklore Institute faculty chooses a winner and an “honorable mention” from the papers that students, along with a faculty sponsor, submit to the competition. As you will see, there are no strictly defined limits for the lengths or topics of the submissions.

Donald Braid examines in detail the changes in a Scottish Traveller’s narrative which are the result of changes in performance contexts. His analysis reveals the rich layers of meaning woven into one of Duncan Williamson’s virtuoso performances. Ilana Harlow recalls the debate on tradition of the early 1980s and reminds us that tradition and change are inseparable. Baqie Badawi Muhammad explains how the Zar cult in Sudan uses spirit possession to deflect the ill effects of the evil eye. She explains the Sudanese concept of women’s beauty as going beyond the physical and encompassing manners, intelligence, and good cooking. All these characteristics can potentially attract envy, and thereby expose a woman and her husband or family to harm. Through the possession rituals of the Zar cult, the spirits invest women with the power to overcome any evil brought on by the jealousy of others. With Daniel Reed, we take an interesting look at the work of George Herzog—founder of Indiana University’s Archives of Traditional Music and one of the great teachers of Ethnomusicology. Reed shows how Herzog’s writing both fit squarely in his day and presaged future trends in Ethnomusicological theory and method.

Finally, with this issue we experience another “changing of the guard.” We have an almost entirely new and energetic crew ready to face the challenges of the next few issues. In the future look for special issues: “Irish Folklore” and “Folklore and Instruction in Africa.”

We encourage any and all interested scholars to submit articles on the above topics or on any subject related to the study of folklore or folklife. Guidelines for submission appear on the inside front cover.

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